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Wildlife Work Group Policy Update

Phoenix
March 28
1977

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April 7, 1977

Memorandum

To: Director (200)

From: State Director - Chairman, Wildlife Work Group

Subject: Policy Development Meeting, March 28-April 1.
Wildlife Work Group

In the interest of meeting your deadline of April 18 for submission of our Work Group efforts to you, we have done the following.

1. Polished up the original presentation given to the full delegation at 12:45 p.m. on Wednesday, March 30. (Addendum A)

2. Recapped to the best of our ability suggestions and comments by members of the policy congress. (Addendum B)

Most of these suggestions are well reasoned but can only be addressed at the Washington level after full analysis of other work group efforts, recognized overlaps and final full spectrum policy determination.

3. Cross-referenced (by number) Addendum B to Addendum A - left margin.

4. Sent copies of this package to all State Directors and to DSC-Director, for their information, further review and additional comment; the latter to be forwarded directly to you to meet the April 18 deadline.

5. Additional copies are enclosed for key staff chiefs in Washington.

In summary, our Work Group's evaluations of this overall policy development effort was positive. We thought the approach and

AMERICAN REVOLUTION BICENTENNIAL 1776-1976

timing for the meeting were excellent. The dedication and professional competence of most of the participants were most impressive; it made one proud to be a BLMer.

On the negative side, we felt there were too many academic exercises. Too much rhetoric was indulged in developing alternatives that were not legally or technically valid; i.e., certainly two "givens" should have been accepted by all. (1) FLPMA is a reality and our new charter, and (2) we are living under the legal mandates of NRDC suit.

Edwin Bardis

On behalf of Work Group -

Sal DeLeonardis
George Francis
Rex Colton
Bob Metzger
John Crawford

Enclosures

Wednesday, March 30, 1977

Preamble to Wildlife Work Group Proposal

In preparation for this meeting our Work Group (W.G.) solicited and received a mass of data from all states, DSC, and Washington staffs.

All comments and recommendations were read and reviewed. We found many excellent proposals - what we are providing to you is a distillate of these. Within the time frame it was impossible to incorporate all. All the submitted material will be available for final deliberations at the Washington level.

Our proposal addresses itself to the National concerns, and where we found significant commonality of views, these we are surfacing.

As an aside, from a personal standpoint and perhaps unique to Montana and the Dakotas, I believe we cannot even pretend multiple use management on NRL if two activities or resources are removed or eliminated from our MU decisionmaking process, and they are minerals and the wildlife resource. To date we haven't established our stewardship in either.

Further, in my opinion, both activities need a massive transfusion and increased awareness of BLM's management responsibilities.

Since October 21, 1976, we have had our marching orders. We have no excuse for evading responsibility. Not only must our many traditional and historical publics be aware of our new role and advocacy, but our own people must embrace the new charter - completely.

Beginning with Director Berklund's courageous stand on the Nevada range controversy (long before FLPMA) our traditional stewardship role has perceptibly changed until now - today - we collectively are forging new benchmark MU policies.

An excellent backdrop for the statement I just made is found in the exchange of letters between George Turcott and Dean Rhoads that stemmed from George's speech of February 5, 1977, before the Nevada Wildlife Federation in Carson City.

John Crawford tells me copies of this exchange will be made available to you. I strongly encourage you to review them.

What our Work Group is proposing is a hardline advocacy for wildlife habitat management. Unquestionably, we will enter a heavy stress period for a number of reasons, and there will be a strong inclination to waffle or avoid hard confrontation. We feel if BLM accepts the alternative of avoidance, it could well prove fatal for our implementation of FLPMA.

Next week another work group headed by Ed Roberts and composed of Bill Leavell, Dean Bibles, Don Seibert and Dave Almand will examine your comments on our presentation in further development of 1602, 1603 - five-year program action guides. Fortunately, John Crawford will assist in bridging both work group efforts -

- - So here goes - -

In addition to the alternative role that we shall propose, we considered one other that we discarded.

The alternative represented the approach suggested by George Alderson, Director of Federal Affairs of the Wilderness Society, and Charles Clusen of the Sierra Club, on May 3, 1975, in their testimony on S 507 (our original BLM Organic Act proposal).

In a nutshell, Alderson and Clusen suggested taking NRL and developing "an inventory of potential new units for addition to National Park System, National Wildlife Refuge System, National Forest System, and National Wild and Scenic Rivers System." These enclaves would be turned over to other agencies to manage, i.e.; Fish and Wildlife Service would manage enclaves of lands valuable for fish and wildlife, etc. Our committee felt FLPMA clearly recognized the role of wildlife in the MU mix, and the alternative of turning over these potentially specialized areas to others for single use management was therefore inconsistent and invalid. The responsibility for multiple use management of NRL was clearly ours, and we had to assume it.

WILDLIFE

BLM Mission - Role

(11) A. "Fish and Wildlife Development and Utilization" is identified as a "principle or major use" under Section 103-L of FLPMA. Therefore, wildlife must be considered equal in rank to any other resource on the NRL.

(1) B. The BLM will assume an advocacy position for wildlife resources on the NRL. This means the wildlife resource will receive as full a degree of management emphasis as any other resource administered by BLM on the NRL.

Significance of Wildlife Resource on NRL

BLM administers 470 M^2 surface acres and an additional 330 M^2 acres of subsurface mineral interest; in total, about 40 percent of the Nation's land. These lands provide the habitat for great

(2) number of both big and small game species, important fisheries, and a number of endangered species. Furthermore, due to the interspersal of NRL with adjoining ownerships, the importance of their habitat to the welfare of wildlife populations is significantly multiplied.

Accomplishment of Mission

The Bureau's Wildlife Mission will be accomplished through:

1. Inventories including identification of "Areas of Critical Environmental Concern" to protect and prevent irreparable damage to fish and wildlife resources as required under Section 201(a) of FLPMA.

2. Planning with land use allocations for protection and/or enhancement of wildlife resources including the establishment of dominant or primary use areas for such purposes with the multiple use definition contained in Section 103(c) of FLPMA.

3. Management for maintenance or enhancement via habitat management plans or wildlife elements in other resource activity plans.

4. Assuming protection of wildlife values and mitigation of adverse impacts to the extent possible in other resource utilization actions.

5. Conducting all necessary studies and research to accomplish the Bureau's wildlife mission on the NRL. This may be accomplished directly, by contract, or by cooperative agreement. However, BLM as resource manager is in the best position to determine the why, what, where, how and when factors involved in such research and studies to support the multiple use decisionmaking process.

6. BLM will initiate the necessary cooperation and coordination with other agencies such as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, State Fish and Game agencies, and the Environmental Protection Agency regarding respective wildlife related responsibilities.

Alternative Roles

Some of the public looks forward toward the management of the NRL to mitigate excessive wildlife depletion on private and other lands. Under FLPMA, this role could be accommodated as a Bureau responsibility. In the case of endangered species habitat, this is already a mandate. However, if BLM fully accepts the role of the NRL as a last resort for mitigation, will this encourage

continued depletion of wildlife habitat on other lands, leaving Federal lands to take up the slack? Yet, if we do not accept the

(4) responsibility of the mitigation provider of last resort for wildlife habitat, are we fulfilling our full responsibilities of NRL stewardships?

(12) Long Term Objectives

By the year 2,000 achieve a wildlife program weighted towards active management, maintenance and enhancement of wildlife resources of the NRL rather than the current heavy weighting of the Bureau's wildlife program towards protection and mitigation under the resource utilization programs.

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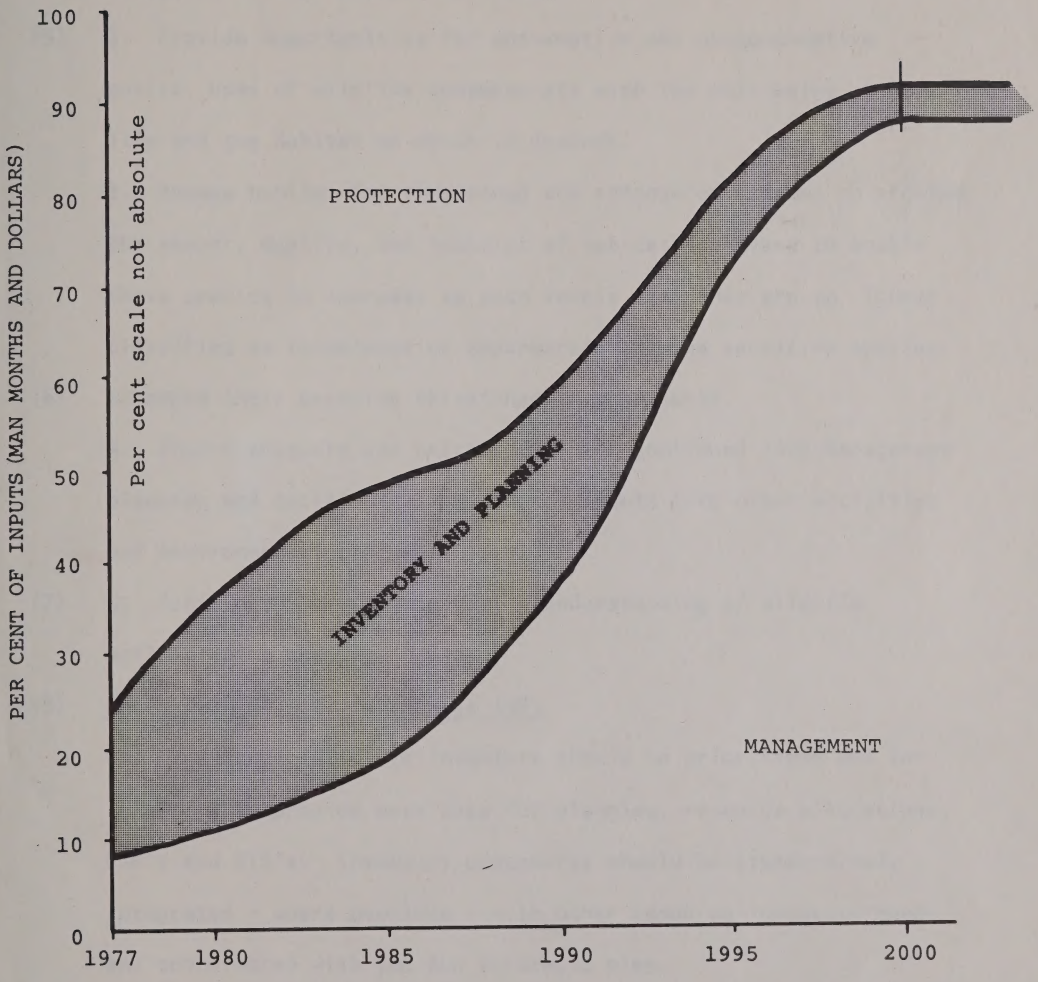
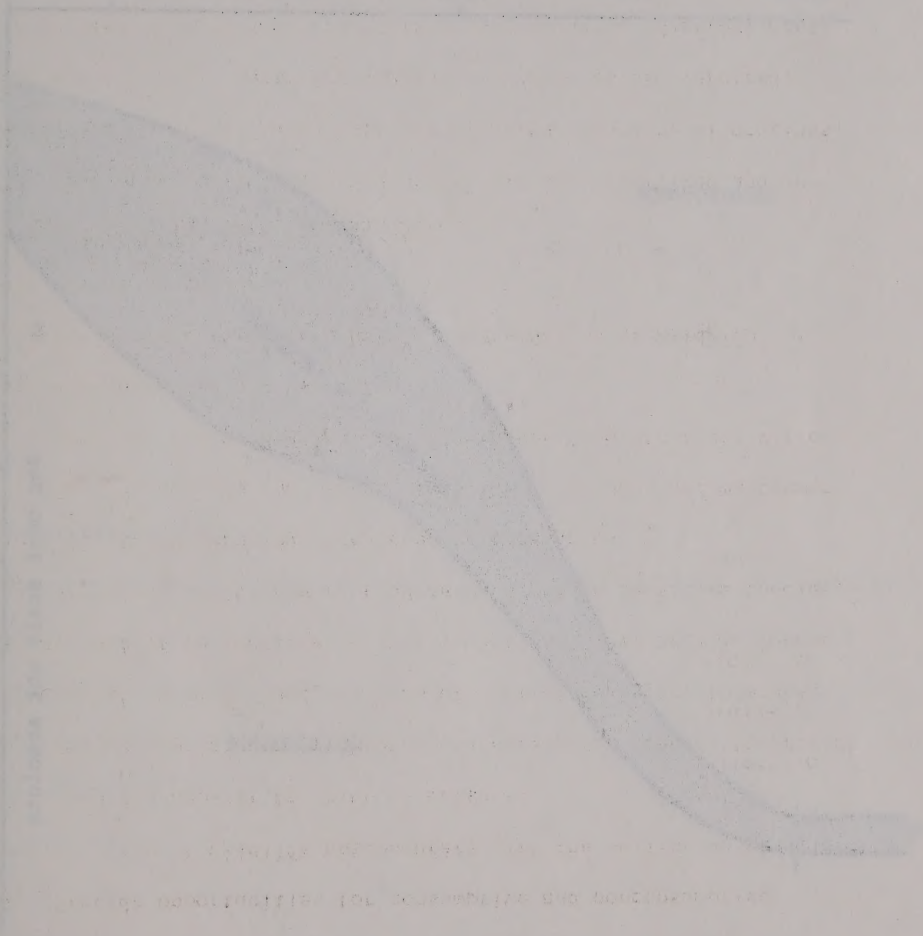
BLM WILDLIFE PROGRAM



Self-explanatory. The heavy input into the protection phase reflects short-term commitment to EIS efforts in energy, timber and range during the short-term (1977-1985). The inventory and planning input serves as the bridge between protection and management. Without it, the transition cannot be made.



Overall Long Term Objectives are:

1. Maintain naturally diverse wildlife communities to preserve the integrity of the natural environment.

(5) 2. Provide opportunities for consumptive and nonconsumptive public uses of wildlife commensurate with the well-being of wildlife and the habitat on which it depends.

3. Manage habitat for threatened and endangered species to provide the amount, quality, and location of habitat necessary to enable those species to increase to such levels that they are no longer classified as threatened or endangered. Manage sensitive species

(6) to avoid their becoming threatened or endangered.

4. Ensure adequate and current data for continued land management planning and decisionmaking, and for inputs into other activities and environmental analyses.

(7) 5. Achieve and maintain a public understanding of wildlife activities on the NRL.

(8) Short Term Objectives Through 1985

1. Inventory: Wildlife inventory should be prioritized and intensified to provide base data for planning, resource allocations, EAR's and EIS's. Inventory procedures should be standardized, integrated - where possible - with other resource inventory needs and coordinated with the BLM strategic plan.

2. Wildlife geographic priorities should be directed toward those areas scheduled for energy, range, and forestry EIS's.

3. Wildlife areas of environmental concern (ACEC) should be identified in BLM priority program areas, through existing data completion update of MFP's that support current energy, range, and forestry EIS programs.

4. Emphasize a public awareness program which recognizes past wildlife accomplishments, ongoing programs, and expanded wildlife responsibilities under FLPMA. Demonstrate BLM's increasing role in wildlife habitat management through instigation of highly visible habitat management programs, such as Birds of Prey areas, Sikes Act programs, etc.

5. Manage habitat on an ecosystem basis for priority species, including sensitive, threatened or endangered wildlife, species of significant economic or recreational importance, and species with low or declining populations.

(9) 6. Identify and acquire legal access needs for public enjoyment of wildlife resources.

(3) 7. In accordance with FLPMA, Section 311(a) through (c), prepare a wildlife report which identifies existing programs, program evaluation, and program budgeting information for preceding current and five succeeding fiscal years. This will be a component of the total Bureau submission, will replace the existing annual wildlife report, and shall be updated annually.

ISSUE:

Wilderness designation and administration may pre-empt habitat management for important associations of wildlife species. Outstanding fish and wildlife values are often the catalyst that foster the inclusion of certain areas within the Wilderness System. Enigmatically, once these species and their habitats are within the wilderness system, practical habitat management for their welfare is constrained by provisions of the Wilderness Act. The consequences of Wilderness Act restrictions should be carefully reviewed before including important wildlife habitats within the System. Where important, habitats are included because of the intent of Congress; administrative procedures should be applied to provide for some degree of essential habitat management necessary to sustain these species within their respective units of the System.

ISSUE:

FLPMA Section 401(b)(1) provides for funding and administration of the range betterment program. This establishes authority for certain percentages of range betterment funds to be spent in areas from which such moneys were derived for programs including but not limited to seeding and reseeding, fence construction, weed control, water development, and fish and wildlife habitat enhancement as the Secretary may direct after consultation with user representatives.

Numerous states have expressed concern over criteria and guidance over allocation of range betterment funds between improvements for domestic livestock and improvements for wildlife habitat.

Consultation with user representatives is understood to include such user groups as wildlife and livestock interests.

(10) Deteriorated range conditions are directly attributable to past livestock grazing practices which currently have adverse impacts upon wildlife and domestic livestock production. It is reasonable to assume that substantial portions of the range betterment funds be used to enhance wildlife habitat to mitigate livestock damage.

Mutual parallelisms bettering condition for both livestock and wildlife are seen through this approach, since what is good for wildlife is good for range.

Suggested Changes to Wildlife Roles, Goals and Issue Paper

By Overall Review Group

3/30/77

1. BLM Mission - Part B - Expand NRL to cover other lands administered by BLM, including those administered by cooperative agreement with other agencies. (Spud Chandler)

2. Significance of Wildlife Resource on NRL - Add nongame species. (Ed Hastey)

3. Short Term Objectives through 1985 - Add "identify instream water requirements for fisheries" as an Item No. 6. (Ron Kuhlman)

4. Alternative Roles - There was feeling in the group that BLM's role as a mitigator of habitat loss on other lands was not valid. Concept of "mitigation" was specifically questioned. (George Francis, Dale Andrus)

5. Long Term Objectives - No. 2 of long term objectives overlaps recreation objectives. (Darrel Lewis) Also, on No. 2, it was suggested that enhancement for more consumptive use be added. (Curt McVee)

6. Long Term Objectives - Define term "sensitive species." (Murl Storms)

7. Long Term Objectives - Expand No. 5 to include other BLM administered lands beyond NRL (use "public lands"?) also cover areas managed by BLM under cooperative agreements with other agencies. (Spud Chandler)

8. Long Term Objectives - Recommendation made to include predator control (Warren Brough - agreed by Dale Andrus) Advice given to get us out of predator control. (Paul Howard) Issue of who should determine number of predators discussed - no conclusion. Predator-prey role should determine controller. (Curt McVee)

9. Short Term Objectives to 1985 - On No. 6 add - need to reduce hunter access to some areas by road closures. (Dale Andrus) (Les Dunn - his will be covered by ATROW). Also should consider State government sharing costs of wildlife road access. (Tom Allen) (Zaidlicz observation - If No. 6 expanded, do not include closure and acquisition in same thought. Legal access also covers existing county roads providing access to NRL that counties may like to close for their purposes.)

10. Issue - Page 4 - Last paragraph is inflamatory to range users in some states; may not serve a productive purpose. (Ed Evatz and Curt McVee)

11. BLM Mission - Sec. 102(a)(8) will provide a more positive presentation of Fish and Wildlife role than the negative 103(8) (Tim Monroe)

12. Alternatives - Show how "Clusen and Alderson" alternative of partitioning NRL into enclaves for dominant use administration by other Federal agencies was considered and rejected. (Bob Jones)

1750 (360)

MAR 3 1977

Mr. Dean A. Rhoads
Assemblyman, Elko District
Nevada Legislature
Tuscarora, Nevada 89834

Dear Dean:

Thank you for your letter of February 16 and the opportunity to clarify what appears to be some misconceptions regarding my remarks to the Nevada Wildlife Federation in Carson City on February 5.

I believe you are basing your reaction to my remarks on a United Press International (UPI) news story. That story quotes me correctly as far as it goes since I most certainly do believe that the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLP&M) places wildlife on a deserved equal footing with other public land resources. This "Organic Act" for the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) represents the first time that wildlife habitat management has been clearly stated as a full partner in public land management. That UPI story, however, could not carry the full text of my remarks and I believe you should have this for a proper evaluation of what I said. A copy is enclosed.

You are absolutely right regarding the significant contributions ranchers have made to wildlife in Nevada and nowhere in my remarks do I state otherwise. The point I want to make is that BLM has also been doing something for wildlife habitat and we are going to do a lot more of it in the future under the Organic Act provisions. You questioned our interpretation of that Act, but I am fully convinced that our interpretation literally follows the intent of Congress. I might add that a recent opinion by a United States District Judge in Washington, D.C., construed this Act as vesting BLM with even more wildlife authority and responsibility than we interpreted!

I also want to reemphasize my point that single-use management of public land resources is "dead." I know of no public land area under our administration that cannot accommodate two or more uses and as a multiple-use agency, we intend to pursue balanced multiple use as charged by the FLP&M. That Act makes it clear that we are to manage the public lands for production of commodities but in such a way that wildlife habitat, cultural resources, outdoor recreation, and other values all receive full management consideration.

It is certainly not our intent to permit overgrazing of public lands by wild horses. We all know where the wild horses originated, Dean, and this is now our most complex management problem. It was also the biggest topic during the extended dialogue following my remarks at the banquet in Carson City. I emphasize that wild horses and burros must be controlled, and we are strongly supporting further amendatory legislation to promptly provide for such control.

You also mentioned private water developments and the contributions they make to wildlife. I repeat that the rancher's role in managing wildlife habitat in Nevada was not mentioned in my speech. I fully realize that both private and Federal contributions to water developments and other range improvement projects have been substantial. And much of this type of work is carried out cooperatively between our agency and the rancher.

I share your concern and appreciation for the western livestock operator but the public lands have to be many things to many people. Livestock grazing is and will continue to be an important use of these lands, but there has to be accommodation for other uses as well. I think you will find that my remarks were directed towards a balanced use, with wildlife and other values receiving the same consideration as livestock grazing and other traditional uses.

Andrew Boyd and his mother, who ranch near Hallock, were in the audience at Carson City and heard my remarks as well as the dialogue that followed. You might wish to contact Andrew and get his reaction to this speech and the subsequent discussion.

Sincerely yours,

[signature]

Associate Director

Enclosure

REMARKS BY GEORGE TURCOTT, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR OF THE BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT, BEFORE THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE NEVADA WILDLIFE FEDERATION, CARSON CITY, NEVADA, FEBRUARY 5, 1977

IT'S ALWAYS A GREAT PLEASURE FOR ME TO RETURN TO MY HOME STATE, AND TO DISCUSS WITH OLD FRIENDS AND NEW FRIENDS THE MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC LAND RESOURCES, A SUBJECT THAT HAS BEEN MY PRIMARY INTEREST AND CAREER FOR 30 YEARS.

TO SET THE STAGE FOR CURRENT STATUS OF THE PUBLIC LANDS, I'D LIKE TO GO BACK TO THE EARLY DAYS OF OUR NATIONAL EXISTENCE. THE HISTORY OF FEDERAL LAND IS ONE OF THE MOST FASCINATING STORIES OF THE AMERICAN ADVENTURE. FOR THE EARLY COLONISTS AS WELL AS FOR OUR GREAT WAVES OF IMMIGRANTS, LAND AND OPEN SPACES HAVE BEEN THE SOURCE AND SYMBOL OF AMERICAN OPPORTUNITY. THE HISTORY OF THIS OPPORTUNITY CAN BE DIVIDED INTO FIVE SOMEWHAT OVERLAPPING PHASES, CULMINATED BY THE FEDERAL LAND POLICY AND MANAGEMENT ACT OF 1976, WHICH HERALDS A NEW ERA FOR THE PUBLIC LANDS.

FIRST OF THESE WAS THE LAND ACQUISITION PHASE. FROM ABOUT 1780, THE ORIGINAL STATES CEDED LAND TO THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT. LAND ACQUISITION CULMINATED WITH OUR PURCHASE OF ALASKA IN 1867.

THE SECOND PHASE WAS LAND DISPOSAL. THIS BEGAN ABOUT 1810 AND CLIMAXED IN 1934 WITH PASSAGE OF THE TAYLOR GRAZING ACT. HOMESTEADING, LAND GRANTS FOR COLLEGES, RAILROAD GRANTS AND OTHER DISPOSAL METHODS WERE USED TO FURTHER NATIONAL EXPANSION AND ECONOMIC GROWTH.

THIRD WAS THE RESERVATION OF LAND FOR PERMANENT FEDERAL OWNERSHIP, SUCH AS ESTABLISHMENT OF NATIONAL FORESTS, PARKS, AND OTHER FEDERAL RESERVATIONS. THIS BEGAN ABOUT 1890 AND CONTINUED UNTIL THE LATE 1930'S WHEN GRAZING DISTRICTS WERE ESTABLISHED.

THE FOURTH PHASE WAS CUSTODIAL MANAGEMENT; MANAGEMENT THAT WAS NECESSARY TO PROTECT VALUES UNTIL DISPOSAL COULD BE EFFECTED. THIS BEGAN ABOUT 1905.

THE FIFTH, AND WE HOPE FINAL PHASE, IS THE CURRENT ERA OF INTENSIVE MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC LANDS AND THEIR RESOURCES WHICH BEGAN ABOUT 1950. THE INTENSIVE MANAGEMENT ERA HAS BEEN CONSTANTLY GAINING MOMENTUM, AND IS REALLY BEGINNING TO TAKE OFF NOW WITH PASSAGE OF THE FEDERAL LAND POLICY AND MANAGEMENT ACT DURING THE CLOSING HOURS OF THE LAST CONGRESS. THIS ACT IS NOW LITERALLY THE "LAW OF THE LAND."

IT IS GENERALLY KNOWN THAT THE BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT HAS OPERATED FOR DECADES UNDER SOME 3,000 LAWS, MANY OF WHICH WERE CONTRADICTORY AND COMPLETELY OUT OF STEP WITH MANAGEMENT NEEDS. THESE ANTIQUATED LAWS -- SOME DATING BACK TO THE POST-REVOLUTIONARY WAR PERIOD -- HAVE CONFUSED THE PUBLIC AND COMPROMISED BLM'S ABILITY TO PRACTICE MULTIPLE-USE MANAGEMENT, INCLUDING WILDLIFE HABITAT MANAGEMENT, ON THE 473 MILLION ACRES ENTRUSTED TO IT IN THE WEST AND IN ALASKA.

THE NEW LEGISLATION SUPERSEDES AND COMBINED MANY OF THESE OLD LAWS, THEREBY STREAMLINING THE BUREAU'S ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES.

UNQUESTIONABLY, THE NEW FEDERAL LAND ACT OPENS A CLEARER PATH INTO THE FUTURE. LET'S REVIEW SOME OF THE HIGHLIGHTS OF THIS LAW.

IT ESTABLISHES THE POLICY THAT THE PUBLIC LANDS BE RETAINED IN FEDERAL OWNERSHIP, EXCEPT IN CASES WHERE DISPOSAL WOULD BETTER SERVE THE NATIONAL INTEREST. THE CONGRESSIONAL POLICY ORIENTED TOWARDS A LIMITED CUSTODIAL MANAGEMENT "PENDING FINAL DISPOSITION" IS CLEARLY AT AN END.

IT'S HARD TO MANAGE WITHOUT KNOWING EXACTLY WHAT YOU HAVE TO MANAGE, AND THE NEW LAW DIRECTS BLM TO "PREPARE AND MAINTAIN ON A CONTINUING BASIS, AN INVENTORY OF ALL PUBLIC LANDS AND THEIR RESOURCES, GIVING PRIORITY TO AREAS OF CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN." THESE AREAS, AS DEFINED IN THE ACT, ARE WHERE SPECIAL MANAGEMENT ATTENTION IS NEEDED TO PROTECT OR PREVENT IRREPARABLE DAMAGE TO IMPORTANT HISTORIC, CULTURAL, OR SCENIC VALUES, FISH AND WILDLIFE RESOURCES, OR TO PROTECT HUMAN LIFE AND SAFETY.

OUR PLANNING SYSTEM HAS ALREADY IDENTIFIED AREAS THAT MERIT SUCH SPECIAL ATTENTION, BUT THE ACT PROVIDES A DIRECT MANDATE FOR FURTHER PROTECTION AND MANAGEMENT OF CRUCIAL WILDLIFE HABITAT. HERE IN NEVADA, EXAMPLES THAT COME TO MIND INCLUDE THE SCHOOL SPRINGS PUPFISH HABITAT, JACK'S VALLEY WHICH IS KEY MULE DEER WINTER RANGE, ALKALAI LAKE WHICH IS KEY WATERFOWL HABITAT, AND SELECTED HABITAT MANAGEMENT AREAS SUCH AS GOSHUTE CREEK SET UP UNDER AUTHORITY OF THE SIKES ACT.

"THIS INVENTORY IS TO BE KEPT CURRENT SO AS TO REFLECT CHANGES IN CONDITIONS AND TO IDENTIFY NEW AND EMERGING RESOURCE AND OTHER VALUES." ALL THIS RESOURCE INFORMATION IS TO BE MADE AVAILABLE TO STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS FOR THEIR USE IN PLANNING AND REGULATION, AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT IS REQUIRED.

THE ACT CLEARLY SPECIFIES THAT THE PUBLIC LANDS WILL BE MANAGED IN A MANNER THAT RECOGNIZES THE NATION'S NEED FOR DOMESTIC SOURCES OF MINERALS, FOOD, TIMBER, AND FIBER. BUT IT ALSO CLEARLY STATES THAT THE NATIONAL POLICY SHALL BE TO MANAGE THE PUBLIC LANDS FOR COMMODITY PRODUCTION PURPOSES IN A WAY THAT PROVIDES FOOD AND HABITAT FOR FISH AND WILDLIFE AND DOMESTIC ANIMALS, PROTECTS SCIENTIFIC, SCENIC, HISTORICAL, CULTURAL, ENVIRONMENTAL, AND SIMILAR VALUES, AND PROVIDES FOR OUTDOOR RECREATION AND HUMAN USE.

THIS SIMPLY MEANS THAT PUBLIC LANDS WILL BE MANAGED UNDER MULTIPLE-USE, SUSTAINED YIELD PRINCIPLES -- IN A MANNER THAT PROTECTS THE QUALITY OF BOTH THE RESOURCES AND THE ENVIRONMENT. THE DAYS OF SINGLE-USE MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC LANDS FOR INDIVIDUAL INTERESTS ARE OVER!

UNDER THIS NEW LAW, WE NOW HAVE SPECIFIC AUTHORITY TO ACQUIRE LANDS AND INTERESTS IN LANDS. SUCH ACQUISITION CAN BE BY PURCHASE, EXCHANGE, DONATION, OR EMINENT DOMAIN. EMINENT DOMAIN OR CONDEMNATION CAN BE USED ONLY TO SECURE ACCESS AND WILL BE CONFINED TO A NARROW CORRIDOR OF LAND. THE ACT ALSO PROVIDES AUTHORITY TO USE THE LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND IN ACQUIRING LAND FOR PUBLIC RECREATION.

AS FAR AS MINERALS AND MINING IS AFFECTED, THE ACT REQUIRES THAT MINING CLAIMS BE RECORDED WITH BLM, MINERAL INTERESTS WILL BE GENERALLY RESERVED TO THE UNITED STATES IN ANY TITLE CONVEYANCES, THE STATES WILL RECEIVE INCREASED PAYMENTS FROM MINERAL LEASING--AN INCREASE FROM 37 1/2 TO 50 PERCENT.

LAW ENFORCEMENT ON THE PUBLIC LANDS IS ALSO PROVIDED BY THE ACT. TRAINED ENFORCEMENT AGENTS WILL BE PROTECTING THE PUBLIC LANDS AND THEIR RESOURCES. WE DO NOT, HOWEVER, PLAN TO UNLEASH A HUGE POLICE FORCE ON THE PUBLIC LANDS. THE ACT AUTHORIZES US TO ENTER INTO CONTRACTS WITH LOCAL ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES FOR HANDLING MUCH OF OUR ENFORCEMENT NEEDS.

AS MOST OF YOU KNOW, THE PUBLIC LANDS WERE NOT INCLUDED IN THE WILDERNESS ACT OF 1964. THAT ABSENCE HAS BEEN CORRECTED IN THIS NEW LAW AND BLM IS NOW AUTHORIZED TO CARRY OUT WILDERNESS STUDIES ON THE PUBLIC LANDS. THE TIMETABLE FOR COMPLETION OF THESE STUDIES IS 15 YEARS.

ONE OF THE MORE LENGTHY AND COMPLICATED PORTIONS OF THE NEW FEDERAL LANDS ACT COVERS RIGHTS-OF-WAY. I WON'T GO INTO THE VARIOUS ASPECTS OF THIS SECTION OF THE LAW OTHER THAN TO SAY THAT THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR HAS COMPREHENSIVE AUTHORITY TO GRANT RIGHTS-OF-WAY ACROSS THE PUBLIC LANDS. THE LAW HAS DETAILED PROVISIONS CONCERNING THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF SUCH RIGHTS-OF-WAY TO PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT.

MOST OF YOU KNOW OF OUR EFFORTS TO ROUND UP WILD HORSES HERE IN NEVADA, AND THE NEW LAW WILL MAKE THIS JOB EASIER. HELICOPTERS AND MOTOR VEHICLES MAY NOW BE USED IN ADMINISTERING THE WILD HORSE AND BURRO ACT. ROUNDUPS WILL NOW BE MORE HUMANE, LESS DANGEROUS AND LESS COSTLY TO THE TAXPAYER.

MOST FEDERAL LANDS HAVE NOT BEEN SUBJECT TO LOCAL TAXATION IN THE PAST, AND LOCAL OFFICIALS ARE USUALLY VERY UNHAPPY OVER THIS. ONE COUNTY OFFICAL IN UTAH THREATENS JUST ABOUT EVERY YEAR TO HAVE A TAX-DELINQUENT SALE OF FEDERAL LANDS IN HIS COUNTY. THE PUBLIC LANDS DO MAKE SUBSTANTIAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO LOCAL GOVERNMENTS THROUGH SHARING OF RECEIPTS COLLECTED FROM THESE LANDS AND THEIR RESOURCES. DURING FISCAL YEAR 1976, 7.2 MILLION DOLLARS WERE COLLECTED FROM THE PUBLIC LANDS OF NEVADA, AND MORE THAN ONE MILLION OF THIS WAS RETURNED TO THE STATE. NEVERTHELESS, THE NEW LAW STATED THAT PAYMENTS SHOULD BE MADE TO STATES AND LOCAL JURISDICTIONS TO COMPENSATE FOR TAX LOSS.

SOME OF THE LEGISLATIVE THRUST STATED AS POLICY PRINCIPLES IN THE NEW FLP&M ACT, HOWEVER, WOULD BECOME EFFECTIVE ONLY THROUGH ADDITIONAL LEGISLATION. FOR INSTANCE, JUST ONE DAY BEFORE THE FEDERAL LANDS ACT WAS PASSED, CONGRESS APPROVED LEGISLATION TO MAKE PAYMENTS TO LOCAL GOVERNMENTS "IN LIEU OF TAXES." PAYMENTS WOULD BE PROVIDED ON THE BASIS OF ACREAGE OF NON-TAXABLE FEDERAL LANDS, THROUGH ONE OF TWO FORMULAS--WHICHEVER IS HIGHER.

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CONCERNING OUR RANGE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM, THE NEW LAW STRESSES THE IMPORTANCE OF ALLOTMENT MANAGEMENT PLANS, CALLED AMP'S BY OUR PROFESSIONALS, AND SPECIFIES THAT SUCH PLANS WILL PRESCRIBE THE MANNER AND THE EXTENT TO WHICH LIVESTOCK OPERATIONS WILL BE CONDUCTED TO MEET MULTIPLE-USE OBJECTIVES. FROM A WILDLIFE STANDPOINT, THIS MEANS EACH AMP MUST INCLUDE WELL DEFINED WILDLIFE OBJECTIVES TO REACH REALISTIC ALLOCATIONS OF FORAGE BETWEEN LIVESTOCK AND WILDLIFE. BALANCING FORAGE USE BETWEEN LIVESTOCK AND WILDLIFE IS OBVIOUSLY ONE OF THE GREAT CONCERNS IN STATES SUCH AS NEVADA, AND REACHING THIS BALANCE REQUIRES CLOSE COORDINATION OF LIVESTOCK AND WILDLIFE OBJECTIVES.

SPEAKING OF AMP'S, I'D LIKE TO CLARIFY A POTENTIAL MISCONCEPTION. THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT HAS NO POWER TO FORCE PRIVATE LANDOWNERS RUNNING LIVESTOCK ON THE PUBLIC LANDS TO BRING THEIR ENTIRE OPERATION UNDER THE AMP PROGRAM. THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT CANNOT AND WILL NOT TELL A RANCHER WHAT TO DO WITH OR ON HIS PRIVATE LANDS. IN SOME INSTANCES, IT IS TO OUR MUTUAL ADVANTAGE TO INCLUDE ALL LANDS -- BOTH FEDERAL AND PRIVATE -- IN A GRAZING OPERATION PLAN, BUT THE DECISION TO INCLUDE PRIVATE LANDS IS UP TO THE RANCHER.

WE'LL DO OUR BEST TO WORK COOPERATIVELY WITH EACH LIVESTOCK OPERATOR TO DEVELOP A PLAN THAT WILL PROVIDE ACCEPTABLE ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL GOALS. IF WE FIND A PLAN IS NOT PRODUCING THE DESIRED RESULTS, WE'RE PREPARED TO DISCUSS REVISIONS -- JUST AS LONG AS THESE REVISIONS DO NOT LEAD TO ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION OF THE FEDERAL LANDS. IT'S AS SIMPLE AS THAT.

GETTING BACK TO THE FEDERAL LAND POLICY AND MANAGEMENT ACT, GRAZING FEES WILL STAY AT THE $1.51 PER ANIMAL UNIT MONTH THROUGH 1977 WHILE A JOINT INTERIOR-AGRICULTURE DEPARTMENT STUDY LOOKS INTO THE SUBJECT OF FUTURE GRAZING FEES. THE ACT EMPHASIZES "EQUITABLE" FEES -- EQUITABLE TO THE HOLDER OF THE PERMIT AS WELL AS TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT.

GRAZING PERMITS CAN BE ISSUED FOR PERIODS OF UP TO TEN YEARS, AND SUCH TENURE INCLUDES A TWO-YEAR NOTICE OF CANCELLATION.

THIS NEW LAW AUTHORIZES INVESTMENT OF GRAZING FEE RECEIPTS IN RANGE IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS. HALF OF SUCH FUNDS WILL BE SET ASIDE FOR RANGE IMPROVEMENT WORK AND ONE-QUARTER WILL BE RETURNED TO THE DISTRICT OR REGION WHERE IT WAS COLLECTED. A POINT TO EMPHASIZE IS THAT THE ACT SPECIFICALLY PROVIDES FOR THE USE OF RANGE IMPROVEMENT FUNDS FOR WILDLIFE HABITAT WORK ANYWHERE IN THE BLM DISTRICT WHERE THE FUNDS ORIGINATED.

THE FEDERAL LAND POLICY AND MANAGEMENT ACT COVERS A LOT MORE THAN I'VE DISCUSSED TONIGHT, AND FULL IMPLEMENTATION WILL LIKELY BE AN INVOLVED PROCESS. WE ARE MOVING WITH ALL POSSIBLE SPEED IN DEVELOPING REGULATIONS THAT WILL EFFECT SECTIONS OF THE LAW ON A PRIORITY BASIS.

I DO WANT TO SAY MORE ABOUT WHAT THIS NEW LAW WILL DO FOR PUBLIC LAND WILDLIFE. IT PUTS WILDLIFE ON AN EQUAL BASIS WITH OTHER RESOURCES AND STIPULATES THAT WILDLIFE, ALONG WITH LIVESTOCK GRAZING, MINERAL AND TIMBER PRODUCTION, RIGHTS-OF-WAY AUTHORIZATION, AND OUTDOOR RECREATION IS A PRINCIPAL OR MAJOR USE OF THE PUBLIC LANDS.

THIS LANDMARK EMPHASIS ON WILDLIFE HABITAT MANAGEMENT ON THE PUBLIC LANDS HAS LONG BEEN NEEDED. BLM IS THE NATION'S LARGEST SINGLE MANAGER OF WILDLIFE HABITAT. CURRENT ESTIMATES OF THE EXTENT OF HABITAT ON LANDS WE ADMINISTER INCLUDES: 377 MILLION ACRES OF BIG GAME HABITAT; 402 MILLION ACRES OF SMALL GAME HABITAT; 93 MILLION ACRES OF WATERFOWL HABITAT; ALMOST FIVE MILLION ACRES OF LAKES; AND 301,000 SURFACE ACRES OF PONDS OR RESERVOIRS. THERE ARE ALSO SOME 270,000 MILES OF STREAMS, THAT INCLUDE APPROXIMATELY 80 PERCENT OF THE SEA RUN FISH SPAWNING HABITAT ON THE WEST COAST.

HERE IN THE LOWER 48, BLM-ADMINISTERED FORESTS AND RANGELANDS PROVIDE HOMES FOR MORE THAN FIVE MILLION BIG GAME ANIMALS SUCH AS DEER, BEAR, ELK, ANTELOPE, BIGHORN SHEEP, MOUNTAIN GOAT, AND MOOSE. IN ADDITION, COUNTLESS NUMBERS OF SMALLER MAMMALS, SONGBIRDS, UPLAND GAME BIRDS, AND REPTILES LIVE ON THE PUBLIC LANDS.

AMONG THE HUNDREDS OF SPECIES OF MAMMALS, BIRDS, FISHES, REPTILES, AND AMPHIBIANS THAT LIVE ON FOREST AND RANGELANDS, AND THE ASSOCIATED INLAND WATERS OF THE UNITED STATES, 178 ARE CLASSIFIED AS THREATENED OR ENDANGERED WITH EXTINCTION. THIRTY FIVE OF THESE OCCUR ON BLM-ADMINISTERED LANDS.

THE NATION'S WILDLIFE HABITAT IS IMPORTANT BOTH AS AN ECONOMIC RESOURCE AND AS A SOURCE OF RECREATION AND PLEASURE FOR THE AMERICAN PEOPLE. THE CONSUMPTIVE AND NONCONSUMPTIVE USE OF WILDLIFE TOTALS MORE THAN ONE BILLION MAN-DAYS ANNUALLY IN AMERICA. THE DIRECT ECONOMIC IMPACT OF THESE ACTIVITIES, NATIONWIDE, APPROACHED TEN BILLION DOLLARS IN 1974, AND RECURRING NATIONAL SURVEYS HAVE SHOWN SUBSTANTIAL ANNUAL INCREASES SINCE THEN. WILDLIFE RESOURCES ON BLM-ADMINISTERED LANDS CONTRIBUTE SIGNIFICANTLY TO THE NATION'S ECONOMY -- A CONTRIBUTION ESTIMATED AT MORE THAN 474 MILLION DOLLARS IN 1975.

MANAGEMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE ON BLM LANDS IS A JOINT EFFORT BETWEEN THE BUREAU AND STATE GAME AND FISH AGENCIES. RESPONSIBILITIES HAVE BEEN FORMALIZED WITH THE ELEVEN WESTERN STATES BY LETTERS OF UNDERSTANDING. THE BASIC IDEA IS THAT BLM IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE HABITAT ON LANDS IT ADMINISTERS, AND THE STATE AGENCIES ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE FISH AND WILDLIFE.

WE HAVE AN AGREEMENT WITH THE NEVADA FISH AND GAME DEPARTMENT FOR ESTABLISHING PRIORITIES AND IMPLEMENTING WILDLIFE WORK UNDER THE EXTENDED SIKES ACT OF 1974. BASICALLY, THIS ACT ESTABLISHES A FRAMEWORK FOR INTENSIVE HABITAT MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS ON THE PUBLIC LANDS AND STRESSES A COOPERATIVE STATE-FEDERAL APPROACH.

UNDER AUTHORITY OF THIS ACT, WE HAVE COMPLETED 35 HABITAT MANAGEMENT PLANS AND HAVE AN ADDITIONAL 15 UNDER DEVELOPMENT. ALL HMP'S, AS WE CALL THEM, HAVE BEEN APPROVED AND SIGNED BY THE FISH AND GAME DEPARTMENT.

LAST YEAR WE SPENT $66,500 TO IMPLEMENT THE MAHOGANY CREEK, RAILROAD VALLEY, AND GOSHUTE CREEK HMP'S. ADDITIONALLY, TWO BIOLOGISTS WERE HIRED TO PROVIDE TECHNICAL SUPPORT TO THIS EFFORT. IN OTHER HABITAT MANAGEMENT PROJECTS, WE CAN POINT TO THE LARGEST SINGLE BLM EXPENDITURE FOR WILDLIFE IN THE SALMON FALLS FISH BARRIER WHICH COST ONE QUARTER MILLION DOLLARS: TO ONE OF OUR SMALLEST WILDLIFE EXPENDITURES - SCHOOL SPRINGS, A BATHTUB-SIZED POOL WHERE WE SPENT $3,000 TO IMPROVE HABITAT FOR DESERT PUPFISH.

BLM HAS A TRADITION IN NEVADA OF CARING FOR AND PROTECTING ENDANGERED WILDLIFE SPECIES HABITAT. WE PROUDLY REFLECT THAT THIS TRADITION PREDATES MORE RECENT LEGISLATIVE MANDATES SUCH AS THE 1973 ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT. OUR EFFORTS HAVE HAD POSITIVE RESULTS SUCH AS INCREASING THE SPAWNING AREA FOR THE THREATENED LAHONTAN CUT-THROAT TROUT BY THREE ADDITIONAL MILES OF STREAM IN MAHOGANY CREEK, INCREASING THE PUPFISH AT SCHOOL SPRINGS FROM 100 TO 200 FISH THROUGH HABITAT DEVELOPMENT AND PROTECTION, AND INCREASING THE SNAKE VALLEY CUT-THROAT TROUT FROM AN INITIAL PLANTING OF 50 TO 3,500 FISH. OUR BIOLOGISTS ARE ALSO ACTIVE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES PROGRAMS THROUGH PARTICIPATION IN FISH AND WILDLIFE RECOVERY TEAM EFFORTS.

TWO BASIC ELEMENTS ARE COVERED IN BLM'S EFFORTS TOWARDS FULFILLING ITS HABITAT MISSION. THESE ARE HABITAT PROTECTION AND HABITAT IMPROVEMENT.

HABITAT PROTECTION IS PRIMARILY ACHIEVED THROUGH WILDLIFE INVOLVEMENT IN OTHER BLM ACTIVITIES AND PROGRAMS SUCH AS RANGE, ENERGY MINERALS, AND FORESTRY. WE ARE PLACING INCREASING EMPHASIS ON PROVIDING WILDLIFE INPUTS IN OTHER BLM RESOURCE PROGRAMS TO ENSURE PROTECTION AND CONSIDERATION OF WILDLIFE VALUES DURING DEVELOPMENT OF OTHER RESOURCE ACTIVITY PLANS.

AN EXAMPLE OF THIS IS THE LIVESTOCK GRAZING PROGRAM IN NEVADA. SPECIFICALLY, WILDLIFE AND FISHERIES BIOLOGISTS PROVIDE TECHNICAL ADVICE DURING PREPARATION OF ALLOTMENT MANAGEMENT PLANS FOR IDENTIFICATION OF WILDLIFE FORAGE AND WATER NEEDS, TO ESTABLISH VEGETATION MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES THAT WILL MEET THE NEEDS OF BOTH LIVESTOCK AND WILDLIFE, AND PROTECTIVE MEASURES SUCH AS FENCING TO PROTECT CRUCIAL AREAS FROM OVERUSE BY LIVESTOCK. THE NEVADA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME IS HELPING WITH THIS EFFORT BY SUPPLYING DATA ON REASONABLE BIG GAME NUMBERS FOR OUR PLANNING PURPOSES.

HABITAT ENHANCEMENT COMES THROUGH HABITAT MANAGEMENT PLANS AND RELATED WORK SUCH AS FENCE MODIFICATION, WATER DEVELOPMENT, STREAM IMPROVEMENTS AND VEGETATION MANIPULATION. THIS WORK IS DONE NOT ONLY THROUGH OUR HABITAT MANAGEMENT PLANS, BUT OFTEN THROUGH PROJECT ACTIVITIES OF OTHER PROGRAMS SUCH AS ALLOTMENT MANAGEMENT PLANS.

FOR EXAMPLE, DEVELOPMENTAL WORK ASSOCIATED WITH OTHER PROGRAMS, SUCH AS AMP'S, FREQUENTLY CAN BENEFIT WILDLIFE WHEN WILDLIFE NEEDS ARE IDENTIFIED AND CONSIDERED EARLY IN THE PLANNING PROCESS. WATERING DEVICES FUNDED BY THE RANGE PROGRAM, FOR EXAMPLE, CAN BE CONSTRUCTED TO ALSO BENEFIT WILDLIFE; LIVESTOCK FENCES CAN BE CONSTRUCTED OR MODIFIED TO ALLOW BIG GAME PASSAGE AND TO PROTECT FRAGILE VEGETATION; AND VEGETATION MANIPULATION PROJECTS DESIGNED TO INCREASE WILDLIFE FORAGE CAN PROVIDE FORAGE BENEFITS AND IMPROVED HABITAT FOR WILDLIFE.

GRAZING SYSTEMS CAN COMPLEMENT WILDLIFE HABITAT MANAGEMENT GOALS, PROVIDED THE GRAZING SYSTEM IS DEVELOPED WITH AN UNDERSTANDING OF WILDLIFE NEEDS AND REQUIREMENTS.

NEVADA HAS MORE THAN 20,000 WILD HORSES AND ALMOST A THOUSAND WILD BURROS. MANAGING THESE ANIMALS ON PUBLIC LANDS THROUGHOUT THE WEST HAS PROBABLY CAUSED OUR BIGGEST RESOURCE HEADACHE. ATTITUDES ON WILD HORSES ARE USUALLY AT ONE EXTREME OR THE OTHER, BUT WE BELIEVE THERE IS A PLACE FOR THESE ANIMALS ON THE PUBLIC LANDS. THE QUESTION BECOMES ONE OF HOW MANY, AND HOW TO KEEP POPULATIONS AT THESE LEVELS.

YOU'RE PROBABLY FAMILIAR WITH OUR "ADOPTION" PROGRAM WHERE WE CAPTURE HORSES AND PLACE THEM WITH PRIVATE INDIVIDUALS UNDER MAINTENANCE AGREEMENTS. THIS PROGRAM RAISES TWO BASIC PROBLEMS -- CATCHING ENOUGH HORSES TO PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT FROM OVERUSE, AND FINDING ENOUGH PEOPLE WHO WANT TO TAKE CARE OF THEM.

WE HAVE SOUGHT AMENDMENTS TO THE 1971 WILD HORSE AND BURRO ACT THAT WOULD ALLOW US TO SELL OR GIVE AWAY EXCESS ANIMALS, AND THAT WOULD ALLOW US TO USE AIRCRAFT IN OUR CAPTURE OPERATIONS. AS MENTIONED EARLIER, THE FEDERAL LAND POLICY AND MANAGEMENT ACT SOLVED ONE OF THESE PROBLEMS.

HOPEFULLY WE WILL SEE NATIONAL LEGISLATION THAT WILL ALLOW US TO SELL OR DONATE WILD HORSES TO QUALIFIED RECIPIENTS. WITH THESE MANAGEMENT ROADBLOCKS REMOVED, WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO PROVIDE HEALTHY, VIABLE WILD HORSE HERDS ON THE PUBLIC LANDS OF THE WEST WITHOUT THE ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION THAT ACCOMPANIES OVERPOPULATIONS OF THESE ANIMALS.

ANOTHER SUBJECT OF CONSIDERABLE INTEREST IN THE WEST, AND ONE THAT IS APPARENTLY OF GREAT CONCERN HERE IN NEVADA, INVOLVES REGULATIONS TO MANAGE THE USE OF OFF-ROAD VEHICLES ON THE PUBLIC LANDS.

IN LATE JULY 1976, WE ANNOUNCED PROPOSED REGULATIONS AND ASKED THE PUBLIC TO REVIEW AND COMMENT ON THESE PROPOSALS. BASICALLY, THE PROPOSED REGULATIONS WOULD AUTHORIZE OUR LAND MANAGERS TO DESIGNATE PUBLIC LANDS UNDER THEIR JURISDICTION AS EITHER OPEN, REGULATED, OR CLOSED TO OFF-ROAD VEHICLES. THE CRITERIA FOR SUCH DESIGNATIONS WOULD BE PROTECTION OF THE RESOURCES OF THE PUBLIC LANDS, THE PROMOTION OF THE SAFETY OF PUBLIC LAND USERS, AND REDUCING CONFLICTS AMONG VARIOUS USES OF THE PUBLIC LANDS.

THE PROPOSED REGULATIONS ALSO CALLED FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN MAKING DECISIONS ON SUCH DESIGNATIONS, AND PROVIDED FOR CHANGING THE DESIGNATIONS WHEN CONDITIONS OR USE SO INDICATES. THERE WERE ALSO SAFETY STANDARDS FOR OFF-ROAD VEHICLES AND A PERMIT SYSTEM FOR ORGANIZED EVENTS THAT INVOLVED 25 OR MORE ORV'S INCLUDED IN THE PROPOSAL.

NUMEROUS COMMENTS HAVE BEEN RECEIVED AND WE ARE CLOSE TO ISSUING OUR FINAL REGULATIONS. HOWEVER, WE WILL WAIT UNTIL AFTER THE END OF FEBRUARY WHEN THE BUREAU OF OUTDOOR RECREATION IS EXPECTED TO RELEASE IT'S ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT ON OFF-ROAD VEHICLE USE. THAT EIS MAY CONTAIN ADDITIONAL INFORMATION THAT SHOULD BE CONSIDERED IN OUR FINAL RULEMAKING.

WITH RESPECT TO THE FEDERAL LAND POLICY AND MANAGEMENT ACT, CONGRESS HAS GIVEN THE BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT A POWERFUL MANAGEMENT TOOL THAT WE INTEND TO IMPLEMENT IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF THE AMERICAN PUBLIC. THERE IS NO ROAD BACK TO THOSE EARLIER PHASES OF PUBLIC LAND MANAGEMENT. THE ONLY ROAD IS TO THE FUTURE, AND BECAUSE OF THE NEW LAW, THE TRAVELING OF THAT ROAD WILL NOT BE LEFT TO CHANCE.

WHAT IS MOST IMPORTANT TODAY IS THAT WE DO NOT TRAVEL THAT ROAD ALONE. OUR COUNTRYMEN AND THE PEOPLE OF THE ENTIRE GLOBE HAVE NEVER BEEN MORE INTERDEPENDENT.

AND THAT'S MY MESSAGE TO YOU TONIGHT: THIS LAND IS <u>OUR</u> LAND. IT'S NOT MY LAND -- OR YOUR LAND -- OR THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S LAND. IT'S A LAND FOR ALL THE PEOPLE, AND IT WAS ENTRUSTED TO EVERY ONE OF US THAT WE MIGHT BUILD A BETTER, STRONGER AMERICA.

THE AMERICAN ADVENTURE ON THE PUBLIC LANDS HAS NOT DRAWN TO A CLOSE. I BELIEVE IT HAS YET TO BE LIVED.

I'LL BE HAPPY TO TRY AND ANSWER ANY OF YOUR QUESTIONS.

AN A. RHOADS
ASSEMBLYMAN
ELKO DISTRICT
RORA, NEVADA 89834

COMMITTEES
MEMBER
AGRICULTURE
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Nevada Legislature

FIFTY-NINTH SESSION

February 16, 1977

Mr. George Turcott, Associate Director
Bureau of Land Management
Department of the Interior
Washington, D. C. 20240

Dear George:

Having read the BLM news release February 5, concerning your statements made in Carson City at the annual meeting of the Nevada Wildlife Federation, I am quite startled by your analysis of the various uses of our public lands.

In this news release, it stated that you told this Nevada audience that recent legislation finally "puts wildlife on an equal basis with other resources." With you being a former resident and native of Elko, Nevada, and familiar with the state, you can't possibly believe this yourself. The Nevada ranchers and farmers over the decades have contributed far more to the preservation of wildlife than any Federal legislation or BLM activity. The legislation you refer to is the Organic Act. The interpretation of this act by your agency does not follow the intent of Congress and is certainly not in the best interest of the public.

You stated that "the days of the single-use management of public lands for individual interests are over." I would think that on top of most every person's "individual interests" is enough food to eat. The continuing management of the BLM that allows some 30,000 head of wild horses to graze badly needed range for both livestock and wildlife, and the constant de-emphasizing of the rancher's investment in the activity of grazing on public lands should be halted by any spokesman from your agency.

Nobody knows better than you the land pattern in Northeastern Nevada. You do still realize that most of the water in that section of the State belongs to the private citizen. Most of the water development has been paid for by the efforts of ranchers for the benefit of both livestock and wildlife. Hopefully in the future your comments

will be directed to the problems that possibly the production of food just might rate higher priority than the wild horse and the increase of wildlife.

Sincerely,

Dean A. Rhoads

Dean A. Rhoads
Assemblyman

DAR:ph

cc: President Nick Theos
Public Lands Council

President Wray Phinney
American Cattlemen's Association

President Bob Wright
Nevada Cattlemen's Association

Chairman Rusty Rostvold
National Advisory Board to the BLM

Chairman Tina Nappe
Nevada State Multiple-Use Advisory Board

Nevada State Journal
Reno, Nevada
2-9-77

Turcott

Wildlife Management 'Gains Equal Footing'

CARSON CITY (UPI) -- The associate director of the Bureau of Land Management told a Carson City audience this weekend recent federal legislation puts wildlife management on an equal footing with other uses of federal lands.

George Turcott told the Nevada Wildlife Federation that the recently approved federal Land Policy and Management Act lists wildlife as one of the major uses of public lands. He said that act clearly states national policy shall include management of lands to provide food and habitat for fish and wildlife as well as business, historical and recreational uses.

Turcott said the legislation confirms multiple-use of the lands. He said the days of single-use management of public lands for the benefit of individual interests are over.

Immediately 77-26

Carl Gidlund (784-5459) 2/5/77

ASSOCIATE BLM DIRECTOR SPEAKS TO NEVADA WILDLIFE FEDERATION

Calling the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) the "nation's largest single manager of wildlife habitat," BLM Associate Director George Turcott told the annual meeting of the Nevada Wildlife Federation in Carson City Saturday night (Feb. 5) that recently approved Federal legislation finally "puts wildlife on an equal basis with other resources."

Turcott, who was raised in Elko and is much involved with national policy direction from Washington, D. C., told the group that the recently approved Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 states that "wildlife, along with livestock grazing, mineral and timber production, rights-of-way authorization, and outdoor recreation is a principal or major use of the public lands."

He said the act "heralds a new era for the public lands" and "opens a clearer path into the future. It clearly states that the national policy shall be to manage the public lands for commodity production purposes in a way that provides food and habitat for fish and wildlife and domestic animals, protects scientific, scenic, historical, cultural, environmental, and similar values, and provides for outdoor recreation and human use.

"This simply means that public lands will be managed under multiple-use, sustaine yield principles--in a manner that protects the quality of both the resources and the environment. The days of the single-use management of public lands for individual interests are over."

MORE

Turcott also said with proper management and guidance, livestock operations on the public lands can "complement wildlife habitat goals, provided the grazing system is developed with an understanding of wildlife needs and requirements." He cited examples such as constructing livestock watering devices so that they can also benefit wildlife, or modifying vegetation to benefit both livestock and wildlife habitat. He also pointed out the law states that a portion of grazing fees collected can now be used to improve wildlife habitat.

He said the BLM in Nevada has spent considerable funds to implement plans to improve wildlife habitat in the state and intends to spend more. In addition, several hundred thousand dollars have been spent in recent years to improve fish habitat, and protect and increase endangered species such as pupfish and cutthroat trout.

"The nation's wildlife habitat is important both as an economic resource and as a source of recreation and pleasure for the American people," he said. "The consumptive and nonconsumptive use of wildlife totals more than one billion man-days annually in America. Wildlife resources on BLM-administered lands contribute significantly to the nation's economy--a contribution estimated at more than $474 million in 1975."

Turcott said the new federal land act holds promise for the future of wildlife and other resources on public lands in Nevada. "Congress has given the BLM a powerful management tool that we intend to implement in the best interests of the American public," he said.

END

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